



Easy Rider

Loudoun County Office of Transportation Services Transit Newsletter

April 2005



Leesburg Park and Ride Lot Update

On Tuesday, April 12, 2005 the Leesburg Town Council and the Leesburg Planning Commission approved special exception application TLSE 2005-01 Leesburg Temporary Commuter Park and Ride Facility - Barber and Ross Site. This is for a temporary commuter parking lot operated by the



Loudoun County Office of Transportation Services at 110 Catoctin Circle, SE that would accommodate up to 400 vehicles. The County has been granted an extension through June 30, 2005 to utilize the

commuter parking spaces at Leesburg Airpark. The move to Barber and Ross is anticipated to happen within the next two months.

Looking much further down the road, the Board's Transportation and Land Use Committee will consider an item at its April 25th meeting to direct staff to process a special exception application for a 700 space surface lot on an uncommitted parcel of the Philip A. Bolen Park

Hamilton Park and Ride Lot Update

The Hamilton Baptist Church has provided notice to the County that as of May 31, 2005, commuter parking will no longer be allowed at their church. They have increased the number of youth and adult activities at the church thus requiring the parking spaces currently being used by the commuters. The County appreciates the church's willingness to allow commuters to park at this facility for the past 10 years.

The Church of the Latter Day Saints on Reid Street in Hamilton has agreed to allow commuter parking at their site on a temporary basis. The County is pursuing other options around Hamilton for a more permanent park and ride lot. Stay tuned for more details on parking in Hamilton.



Dulles Town Center Mall

The County is anticipating adding two buses to the schedule early next fiscal year (July 2005). When the next iteration of schedules is designed, the possibility exists that a pick-up location at the Dulles Town Center will be added to the Cascades/Lowes Island service to West Falls Church Metro Station. The



owner of the property (Lerner) proffered 100 park and ride lot spaces when their rezoning was approved many years ago. County staff will work with this developer to identify these spaces. Once both parties have agreed to the location, the Cascades/Lowes Island to West Falls

Church Metro schedule will include a stop at Dulles Town Center.

One Ringee Dingee

A Commuter Culture Survey completed in 2003 by WageWorks Center for Commuter Studies asked the question: What things do your fellow commuters do



that irritate you? **The response that dominated the list was loud cell phone usage.** The other less irritating items included: smells of bodies and food; self-absorption to the point of being unaware when people need to enter or exit the vehicle; and other loud

annoyances such as music or personal devices.

Two other things that our riders have issues with on our buses, but not mentioned in the above survey, are reclining seats and packages in the seats. When you are reclining your seat, please be aware of passengers in the seat behind you and how lowering your seat may be too uncomfortable for them. Bags, laptops, lunch boxes, purses, etc. need to go in the overhead racks or down by your feet. It would be really great if riders would move their belongings before another rider has to ask.

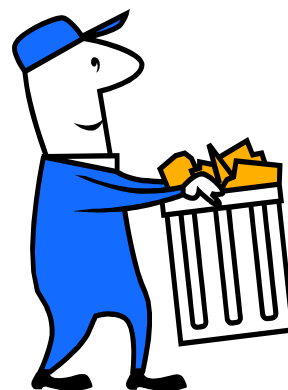
This was a web-based survey conducted in five metro regions including Washington, DC. Some other tidbits found in the survey were as follows: Respondents from the five regions averaged 46 minutes a day commuting. Those in Washington, DC averaged 41 minutes a day. A majority of respondents liked the reduction in stress (61%) in taking public transportation, with 58% liking the reduction of the cost of driving alone. The survey also determined that the majority of those who take public transportation prefer a window seat (54%) and of course riders prefer sitting in their own seat if possible, facing forward.

Let's see if we can do our part to remove the number one irritant from our commuter buses by keeping our cell phones on vibrate and our voices low when speaking on the phone. Or better yet not use them at

all unless an emergency arises. Now repeat after me: I will put all my stuff in the overhead compartment, turn off my cell phone and recline my seat half way back, oh, and enjoy my trip!

Take Out The Trash

Just another reminder that your mother doesn't ride the bus and drivers shouldn't have to be responsible for cleaning up your messes, particularly trash left behind by riders. Please remember to take your trash (newspapers, cups, tissues, etc.) with you when you disembark the bus or put it in the garbage bags provided at the front of the bus by the driver. The drivers do a walk through on the buses every day before a run removing litter and checking the bus out. You, the rider, can do your part in helping the driver keep the buses clean. Don't Be A Litter Bug!



Bad Checks

Occasionally, OTS staff receives notice from the Treasurer's Office that one of our riders has written a bad check (either the account has been closed or there are insufficient funds). When this happens to a rider, a letter is sent from the Treasurer's Office asking for payment on the bad check plus a processing fee. If the rider does not make payment to the Treasurer's Office for this bad check within the time specified in the letter, then the Treasurer's Office sends a copy of the letter with the bad check to the OTS office. OTS staff then places the name of the bad check writer on the bad check list that is distributed to all the busmeisters. Busmeisters will then refuse to accept another check from riders whose names appear on the bad check list. So if you pay for ticket books with a check, be aware that the busmeisters are reviewing their bad check list and may not accept one from a rider who has bounced a check and not made restitution.

Upcoming Commuter Activities

Commuter Connections' Free Cup of Joe!

On the morning of Wednesday, April 20th, Commuter Connections along with **Gevalia Kaffe** will be sponsoring a "GRH Information Day" at the Dulles North Transit Center.



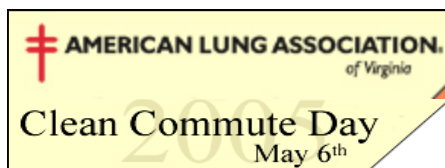
Commuter Connections staff will be on hand to answer any questions about the free Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) program and ridematching service. They will also have some giveaways for the riders. Plus and this is the big reward, the folks from **Gevalia will be serving their freshly brewed premium coffee**. They promise it will be some of the best coffee you'll ever drink!

This is also an opportunity to meet representatives from the Loudoun County Office of Transportation staff who will answer questions about getting around the County and to work via transit.

PS: Coming Soon - How would you like a chance to **win a trip to Hawaii**? Starting April 20th a contest will be posted on the website www.commuterconnections.org. Take a peak then and start thinking of the Top Ten Reasons Why Getting To Work Is Better With Commuter Connections and Gevalia Kaffe.

Clean Commute Day

On May 6th the American Lung Association of Virginia and a coalition of partners are hosting "Clean Commute Day" – a statewide event to promote and encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation.



Virginians across the Commonwealth will be encouraged to walk, bike, carpool, take public transit, use an alternative-fueled vehicle to get to work or choose to stay at home and telework on May 6th!

Motor vehicle exhaust contributes to the formation of ozone pollution. Ozone pollution levels are highest during the period between May and October when higher temperatures and the increased amount of sunlight combine with the stagnant atmospheric conditions that are associated with ozone air pollution episodes. Our collective actions can help give the air a brake and protect our most vulnerable populations – children, the elderly and those with chronic lung and heart disease.

In addition to encouraging all Virginians to participate, local events are being planned for Arlington, Charlottesville, Fredericksburg, Hampton Roads, Loudoun, Prince William, Richmond, and Roanoke featuring commuter appreciation activities.

To express our customer appreciation to our riders a small gift will be given to each passenger. Find out more about local events, how to participate, and sign up online at www.cleancommuteva.org to be eligible for statewide prizes. You can also challenge a friend or business associate to clean commute after you've made your commitment to clear the air!

Bike To Work Day 2005

The biggest news for Bike to Work 2005 is that it is going to be a **NATIONAL** Bike to Work Day event rather than the Regional event it has been in the past. The Washington Region has decided to unite with Los Angeles, Houston,



Chicago, Boston and other cities in the Bike to Work Day efforts all on the same day. It is hoped that the national event will bring more attention to this alternative form of commuting and encourage more of us to consider using our bikes for more than recreation.

Previously, Bike to Work Day had always been held on the first Friday of May in the Washington, DC region. The region will now participate in the National Bike to Work Day 2005 on the third Friday of the month, May 20, 2005. The weather should be warmer for our early morning riders and the sun will rise just a little earlier to light their path. It will also make it easier on the volunteers that arrive at the pit stops as early as 5:00 am to prepare the site to serve breakfast, set up displays to inform and entertain and greet some of the very early riders getting a head start on the day.

So if you want to ride your bicycle into work on Friday, May 20th, you can bring it back home on the bus. Bicycles can be loaded at the following locations: any pickup location in Loudoun County; West Falls Church Metro Station, Rosslyn Metro Station, the Pentagon and the first stop of each bus run. Happy peddling!

CBAB Email Address

The Commuter Bus Advisory Board (CBAB) is appointed by the Board of Supervisors to serve in an advisory capacity to the Transit Division Staff in matters related to the commuter bus. Should you wish to communicate with this Board, you can now do so through a special email box CBAB@loudoun.gov.

Who's Running The Show!

Stephanie Bell is the General Manager with Yellow Transportation (Connex North) and answers the questions of "Who is Running the show" for operation and maintenance of Loudoun County Transit. She was promoted into this position late last year.

Stephanie was born in Ft. Hood, Texas and was raised in Detroit, Michigan. She moved to Virginia

when she was 15 where she lived on a 45-foot house boat on the Occoquan River. In the early 1990's she obtained her CDL through Fairfax County schools.

She began her career with Yellow Transportation in October 2000 as a driver. In the spring of 2002 she became the morning supervisor which turned into the Loudoun County



Operations Supervisor down the road. And as mentioned above she is now the GM at Yellow Transportation in Purcellville for Loudoun County Transit.

Stephanie is married to Gene Bell. She has three children: daughters, Jessica 15, and Neoma 13, and a son, Duncan, who is 9. Plus she has two other very sweet babies (dogs): Tazz a Shih Tzu and Max the Chihuahua. When she is not driving a bus, fixing a bus or supervising the operations, she loves to camp, cross stitch, travel and read.

Those of you who are familiar with Ben and Brian on WMZQ know when they interview a celebrity they put them through the "Fast and Furious." Here are Stephanie's answers when asked: What is in your car cd player right now - Smokey Robinson; Who would you want to most have dinner with - her grandmother (who passed away 10 years ago); Favorite TV show - The Young and the Restless; First Celebrity Crush - John Stamos; and last but most important, Have you ever milked a cow - No!

Coming This Summer

Two new LC Transit MCI commuter coaches are being built in Winnipeg and will arrive here this summer. Also, look for a new summer schedule soon that will have mid-day Friday buses.

This Transportation Newsletter is published by the Loudoun County Office of Transportation Services staff. Visit us on the web at www.loudoun.gov/bus.